

MOTOCROSS

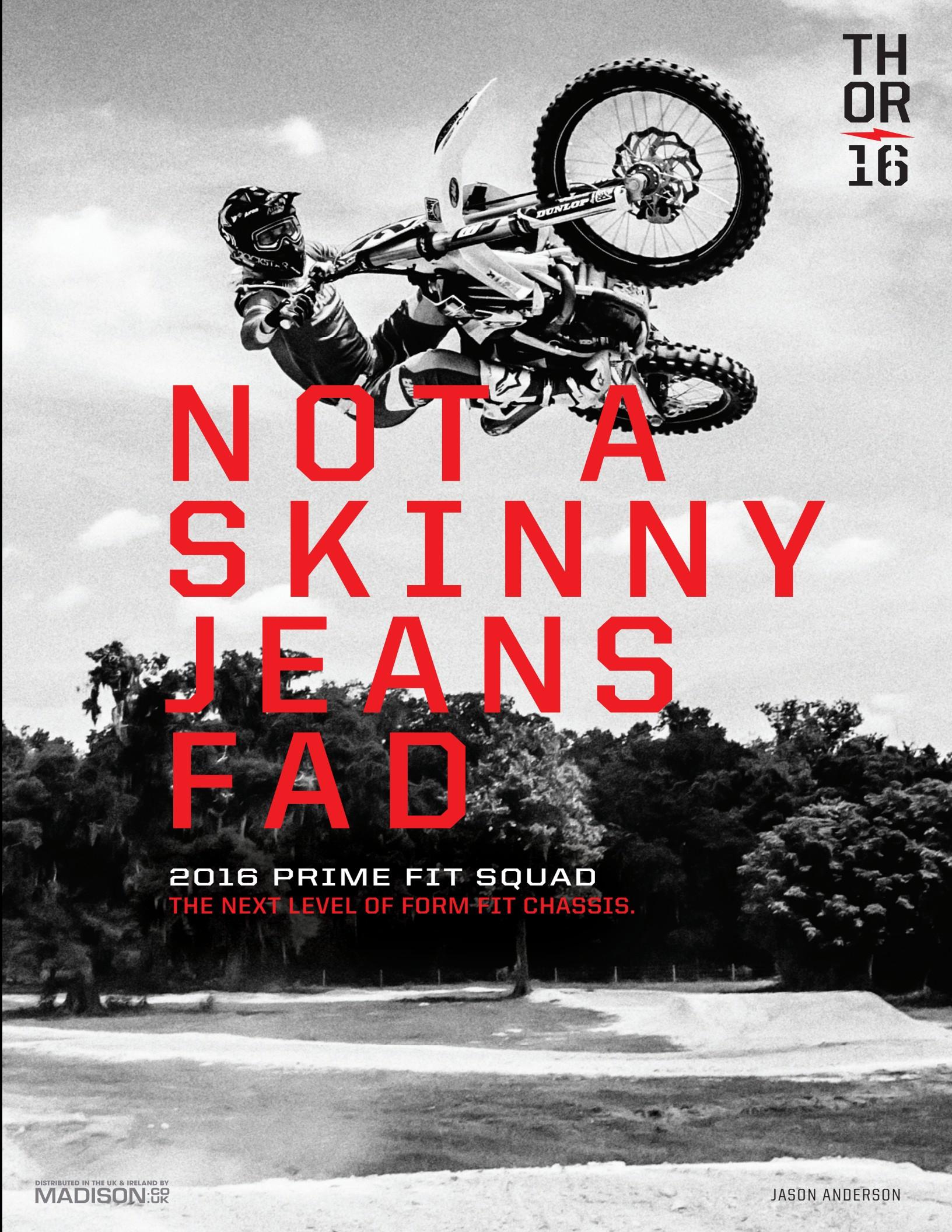
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2016 FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

THE UNTOLD STORY

Story Geoff Meyer images Mazzimo Zanzani, Bavo and Ray Archer

There is always something special about the changing of the seasons, and when I say seasons I mean motocross seasons. 2015 was just amazing, a really special MXGP and MX2 year. 2016 though offers so much more. Not only a lot of MX2 riders moving up to the MXGP class, but riders changing teams, teams changing management, changing sponsors, we have a lot to look forward to. How about all the top riders starting in Qatar for the opening round without injury, wouldn't that be something?

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It isn't a secret the MXGP series has moved onto another level. Youth-stream, the teams, and the riders have all worked hard for this and it's really exciting to be a part of it.

MXGP

Let's start with the riders in 2016. Six former or present world champions will race in the MXGP class in 2016. Those led by defending champion Romain Febvre (still feels strange not saying Antonio Cairoli), and with the legend himself Cairoli back fit, plus former MXGP champion David Philippaerts, and former MX2 champions Ben Townley and Jordi Tixier, plus current MX2 champion Tim Gajser it will be a lot of top quality riders going for it in 2016.

But then we have the other guys, the guys who have really pushed Antonio Cairoli over the last 10 years. Clement Desalle in his new factory Kawasaki team, Gautier Paulin backing up his runner-up place in 2015, Max Nagl the forgotten man in MXGP, the tough Russian Evgeny Bobryshev, Belgian chargers Jeremy Van Horebeek, Kevin Strijbos and Ken De Dycker. How about another of the new breed in Valentin Guillod? It will be complete chaos as these riders all want to win so badly.

How the season will pan out is unknown, will Italian legend Cairoli show he still has it, or will Febvre continue his improvement. Yamaha have had a mixed decade. I remember David Philippaerts having a brilliant 2008, winning the MX1 title and then suffering injuries that really stalled his career. Josh Coppins brilliant 2007 season was also followed with injuries and a sudden lack of form. Will Febvre follow their careers or that of Cairoli? Cairoli of course rode for Yamaha in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009, then rode for KTM for six years, winning titles in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. He won two titles in those five years for Yamaha and five for KTM in the same time span.

If I had to tip I would go with a war between Febvre and Cairoli, with

some good results from Townley, Desalle, Paulin, Nagl, Tixier, Gajser and Guillo. Don't be surprised to see Van Horebeek, Strijbos, Bobryshev, Simpson and Coldenhoff also show some surprising results. Damn there are a lot of names in that field.

MX2

Down in the MX2 class it will also be exciting. Jeffrey Herlings back fit and ready to dominate. Max Anstie trying to prove he can beat the Dutchman, and of course the rise of young American Thomas Covington. I wouldn't be surprised if this kid wins a few GPs in 2016. He will however need Herlings to struggle at some point, which surely couldn't happen again after his terrible 2014 and 2015 seasons.

I can't think of anyone who doesn't want to see Herlings once again dominate like he did in 2012 and 2013. I think he will and then in 2017 move up to the MXGP class. Don't be surprised to see him race in America in 2016 and also do a bunch of MXGP races after he picks up the MX2 title.

Sponsors

Just look below at the team lists and the amount of support from companies like Red Bull, Monster Energy, Rockstar Energy, it is amazing and shows that the bigger more professional image of the MXGP series is working wonders. These massive companies want to be involved and are throwing a lot of money into the MXGP series.

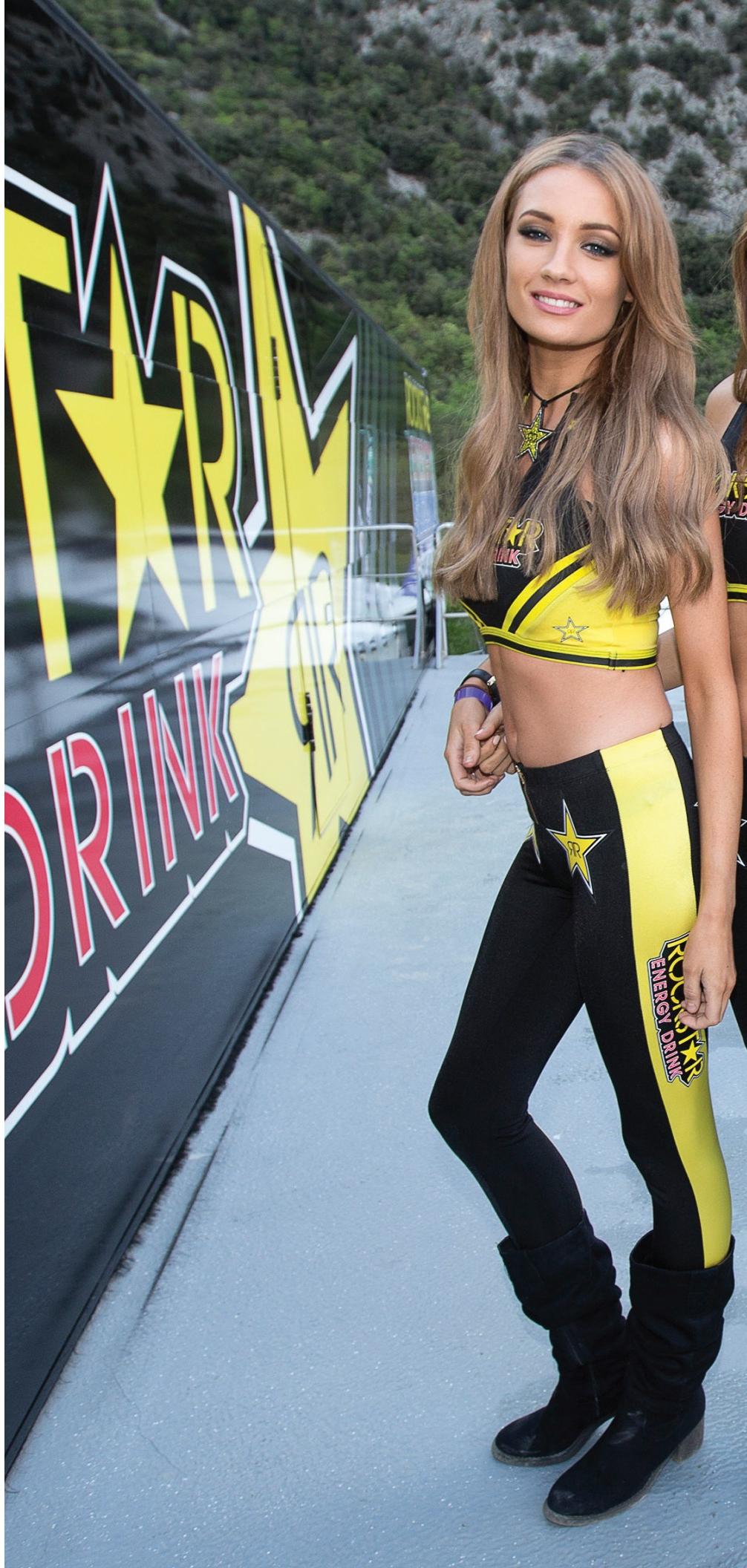
Countries

The countries we will visit in 2016 is just as exciting, Qatar, Thailand, Malaysia, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, United States of America, not to mention the stronghold countries of the MXGP series Belgium, Holland, France, Germany, Italy, Great Britain, Czech Republic, Latvia and Switzerland.

My favorite stops will be Thailand, Malaysia, Assen in Holland, Trento in Italy, Matterley Basin in UK, and Kegums in Latvia.

MXoN

It doesn't get any bigger than Maggiora and the Monster Energy Motocross of





Nations. It will be packed with people and the whole area is already booked out, in fact all hotels within 100 kilometers of the circuit sold out last September (as soon as they came available). While we have had a lot of really cool MXoN events the last 10 years, I think Maggiora, with the history from that classic 1986 MXdN, will be the biggest best MXoN ever.

The Teams in 2016

Monster Energy Yamaha Factory Racing

Romain Febvre, Jeremy van Horebeek and Valentin Guillod

Red Bull KTM Factory Team

Antonio Cairoli, Glenn Coldenhoff, Jeffrey Herlings, Pauls Jonass and Davey Pootjes

Monster Energy Factory Kawasaki

Clement Desalle and Jordi Tixier

Suzuki Factory team

Kevin Strijbos and Ben Townley

HRC Honda Factory Team

Gautier Paulin and Evgeny Bobryshev

Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racing

Max Nagl, Christophe Charlier, Max Anstie and Thomas Covington

Rockstar Energy Suzuki Europe

Jeremy Seewer and Brian Hsu

Monster Energy KRT MX2

Dylan Ferrandis and Petar Petrov

Monster Energy DRT Kawasaki

Tommy Searle, Mel Pocock and Vsevolod Brylyakov

Gariboldi Honda

Tim Gajser and Jorge Zaragoza

Wilvo Forkrent KTM





Shaun Simpson and Adam Sterry

HSF Logistics KTM

Brian Bogers, Roberts Justs and Calvin Vlaanderen

Marchetti KTM

Jose Butron, Michael Ivanov, Ivo Monticelli and Christopher Valente

Silver Action KTM

Jens Getteman

Sarholz KTM

Harri Kullas, Dennis Ullrich, Valtteri Malin and Angus Heidecke

Hitachi Construct Machinery KTM UK

Ben Watson

Kemea Racing Yamaha

Benoit Paturel and Brent van Doninck

Standing Construct Yamaha

Julien Lieber and Aleksandr Tonkov

DP19 Racing Yamaha

David Philippaerts

JK Racing Yamaha

Alex Snow and Alfie Smith

Tip Top Racing Yamaha

Milko Potisek

Massignani Husqvarna

Rui Goncalves

JTech Honda

Damon Graulus and Henry Jacobi

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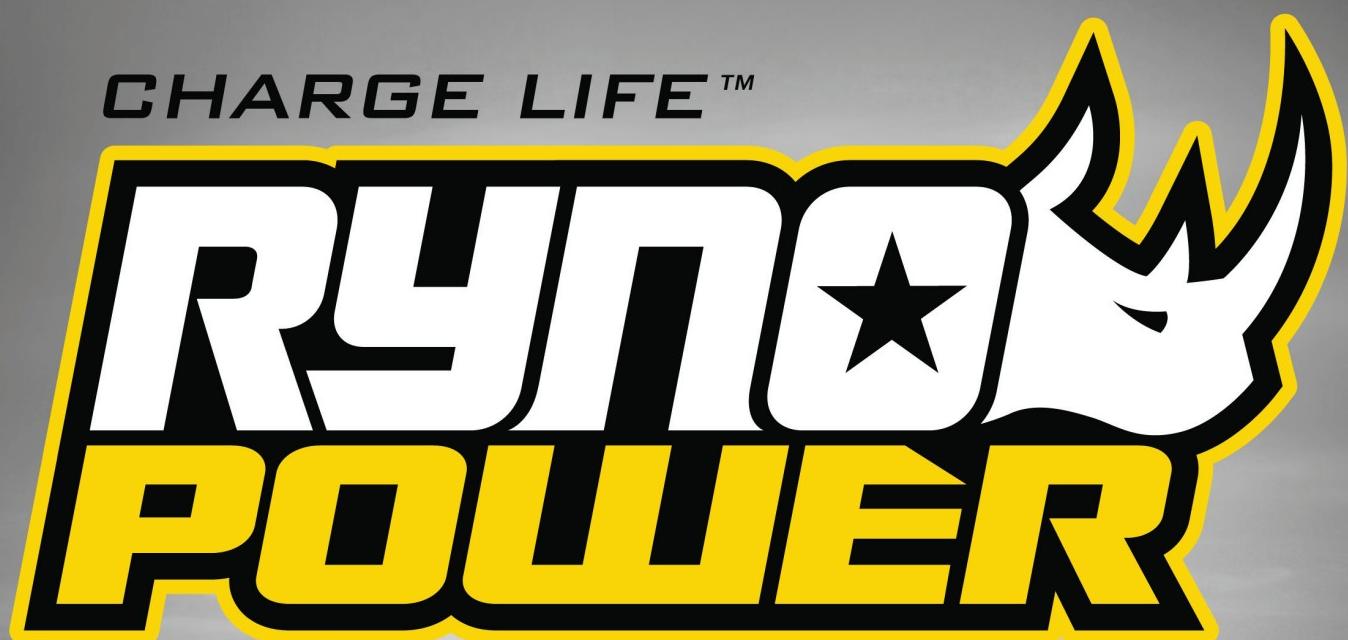
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HUSQVNA THE FUTURE

The new Husqvarna 2016 motocross line-up represents a revolutionary step forward. Beginning a new era, every detail of this new from the ground up motocross range has been specifically designed to improve performance. Featuring massive weight savings, totally new bodywork, new engine design and new carbon fibre sub frames, the 2016 motocross bikes embrace Husqvarna's rich racing heritage to ensure premium motorcycles with state-of-the-art technology.





Presenting the all-new FC 450, FC 350 and FC 250 4-stroke models, plus the all-new TC 125 machine, Husqvarna Motorcycles offers a range of bikes that effortlessly supports riders of all ages and abilities, in all situations. Husqvarna's six-strong MY16 model range ensures racers and riders alike have the perfect machinery to achieve their goals.

Rethinking torsional rigidity and longitudinal stiffness, the hydro-formed, laser-cut and robot welded chromium molybdenum steel frame is lighter and more compact to offer better handling and feeling than its predecessor. Coupled with its new three-piece carbon fibre sub frame – 1 kg lighter than the previous sub frame – and a new cast aluminum swing arm, it ensures a motorcycle with unrivalled rideability and ease of use.

Perfectly matching the new chassis characteristics, new CNC machined triple clamps, WP's 4CS forks, a new shorter and 500 grams lighter WP rear shock are mated to a new rear link geometry, which improves both damping and balance. It ensures optimum traction and control across all riding situations and terrains.

In the engine department the FC 450, FC 350 and FC 250 enjoy further developments and improvements and together with the TC









125 benefit from a significant reduction in engine weight. Smaller and lighter 4-stroke motors are completely reconfigured for optimal mass-centralization.

Across all 4-stroke models a new Keihin engine management system processes data faster while a 44 mm throttle body – compact and 100 grams lighter – provides immediate throttle response thanks to the elimination of a throttle linkage. New for MY16 is launch control, integrated into the standard handlebar map switch. With the ability to alter engine characteristics, the launch control feature seeks out maximum traction to deliver consistently perfect starts as standard.

Overall weight savings have been significant. The FC 450 is now 5.2 kg lighter than the previous model, while the FC 350 is 4.7 kg less than the 2015 machine. The FC 250 has been lightened by 4.0 kg.

Importantly, the exhaust system has been completely redesigned to improve mass centralization and reduce sound levels in keeping with FIM limits. Notably shorter and sleeker, the FC 450 sees its resonance chambers integrated into the header pipe.

Keeping in line with a more compact and sleeker generation of motorcycles, the distinctive and futuristic bodywork with striking pearl blue and electric yellow col-







ors and graphics marks a new era in Swedish inspired design. The revised ergonomics and new seat provide greater comfort and superior control in all riding situations.

Finally, new GSK brake discs, Pro Taper handlebars, ODI lock-on grips, new WP radiators, new 7-litre polythene fuel tanks, a new air box design with tool-less air filter access, as well as black DID alloy rims, CNC machined hubs and Dunlop MX52 tires further ensure that the all-new MY16 motocross line-up is one of the most sophisticated on the market.

While considerable effort has gone into the release of the all-new 4-stroke models, the 2-stroke range also sees improvements – in particular the TC 125.

The eighth-liter machine receives a significantly smaller and lighter engine. Redesigned and repackaged with a new power valve and exhaust it has an increased power output from 38 hp to 40 hp. The 2016 TC 125 is 3.2 kg lighter compared to the previous model.

For the youngest racers in the Husqvarna family, the agile and powerful TC 85 is the ideal entry machine into motocross. Adorned with stylish colors and graphics, it is the perfect motorcycle for the champions of tomorrow.

Refinements to the TC 250, including new CNC triple clamps with rubber damping, new seat cover and new disc brakes, make it a formidable competitor to its 4-stroke brothers.





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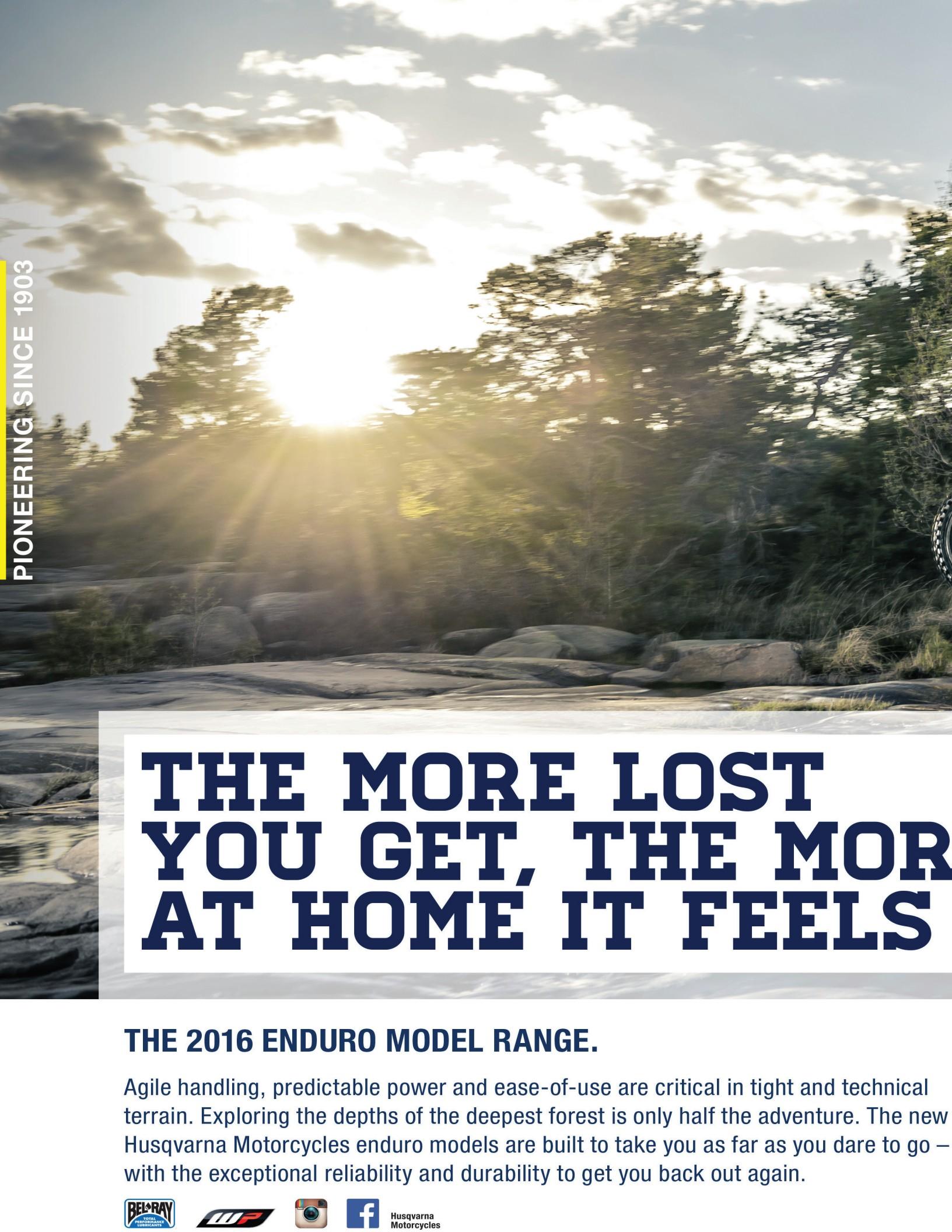


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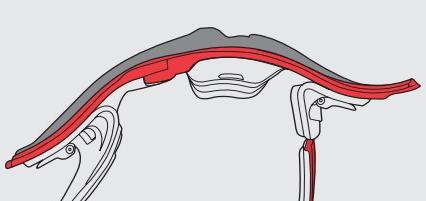
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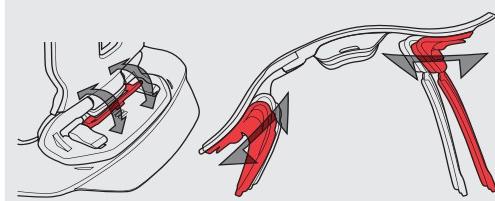
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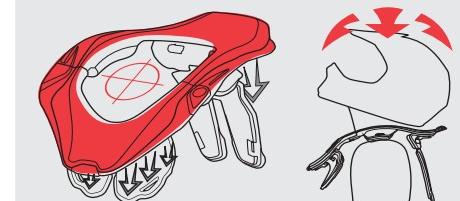
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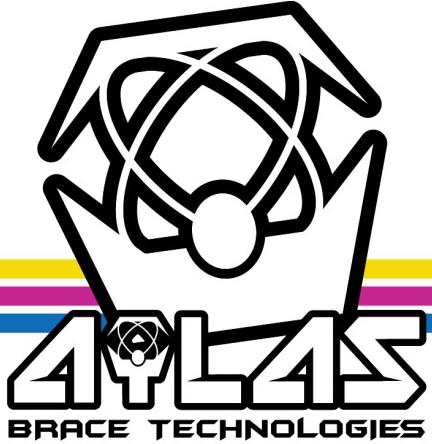
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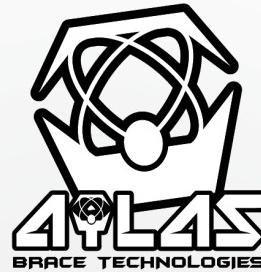
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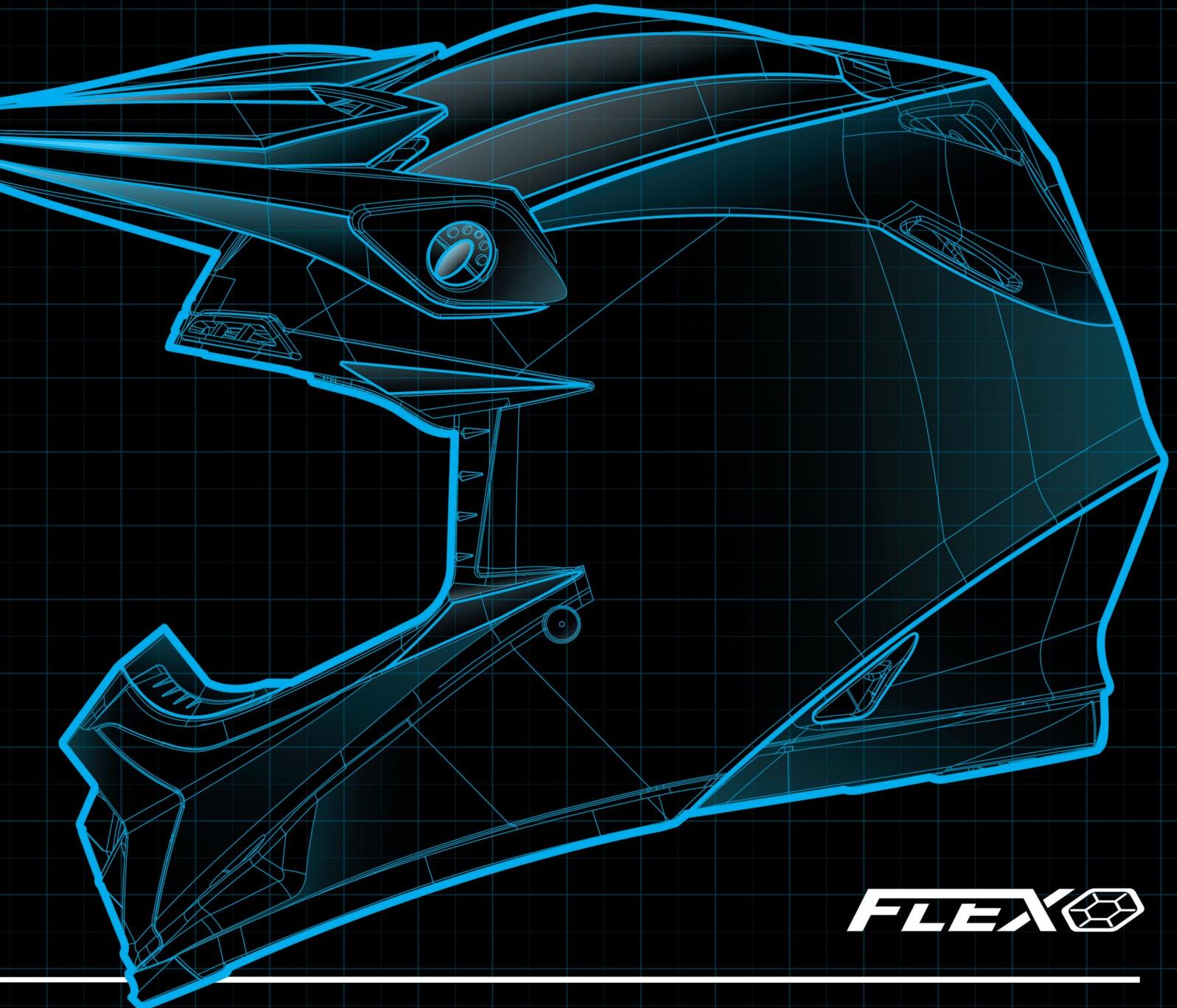
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Josh Coppins

A Life of Knowledge

Geoff Meyer interview - Images Yamaha

Josh Coppins has a passion for life, adventure and living on the edge. As a racer he was special, maybe not special enough to stop Stefan Everts reign in Europe, but special enough to nearly win himself a world motocross championship. On talent alone the New Zealand wasn't really making it happen, but his will and determination was as strong as anyones in the paddock. We caught up to Josh and asked him some questions about the MXGP series and his good mate Ben Townley.

Motocross Illustrated: You live a great life down there, but do you also miss Europe and the whole scene here?

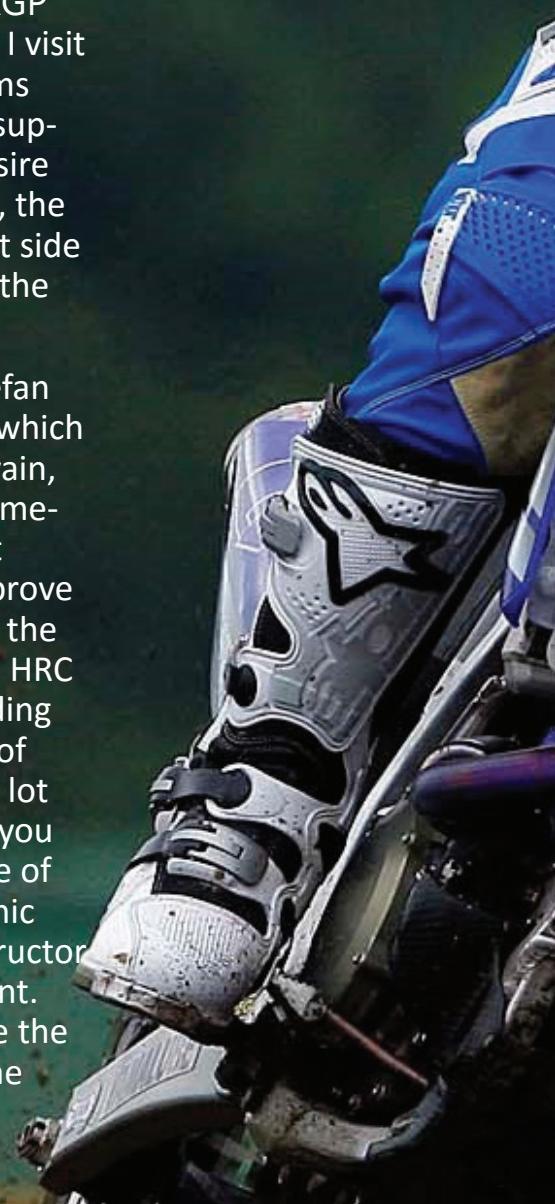
Coppins: Definitely, still being involved with racing and coming back and seeing the level of the Grand Prix circuit and the teams there are things you miss. But you can't have both, but I miss it for sure, that's a given.

Motocross Illustrated: The level of the MXGP class at the moment is really high, and I often think about that 2005 season with yourself, Everts, Smets, Pichon and Townley. That was a pretty special year. How would you rate current depth to that season?

Coppins: I think the level is higher now, I like the Grand Prix's I think it's heading in a good way and the level of the riders is really high, a lot

of positives about the MXGP series. The thing I see when I visit is how professional the teams have stepped it up and the support of the rider and the desire to win. The testing program, the technology of the bikes, that side is probably for me changed the most.

MXLarge: When you see Stefan (Everts) taking over Suzuki, which was already run well by Sylvain, but some new blood and somebody like Stefan, it is a great move and I think he will improve it there a lot with help from the right people. Then you have HRC being so involved now, building like it was in the 1980s and of course KTM have invested a lot into the MXGP series. Then you look at the Youthstream side of it, the VIP tents, the mechanic area tents, the whole infestructor is just so good at the moment. It's just amazing. It has to be the biggest, best run series in the





world for those things?

Coppins: Being a team owner in New Zealand and taking sponsors to different events, I can now see what Youthstream are trying to do on a different level. Being able to take your sponsor to big events and give them that VIP treatment. I mean we have all had times when we thought were is Giusepppe heading with that, but if you look at the 150cc class, the EMX, and the development of the riders, it seems really good now and there is a good structor for riders to get up into the bigger picture. I think there are more positives than negatives in the MXGP series.

Mxlarge: I was listening to a podcast from Steve Matthes with Shayne King the other day and Steve (Matthes) was saying how it's difficult for riders to get a GP ride now. With the current structor for riders moving into the EMX series and the 150cc series, doing well, and I think it's just as easy now as it was before to find your way eventually in a good team, if you have the talent.

Coppins: Yes I would and I have ridden in two of those eras and we are now in the third era. When I first rode there were no support teams, there was the factory teams, and then everyone else was on their own, more or less. Then we had a lot of development teams and





now we have the development through those EMX races. I think there are a lot of opportunities and right or wrong every ride has a different way of getting there. I think the top guys will always get there and now the other guys have a chance to get through the EMX system. I think it's promising.

MXLarge: Ben is coming back, and I think everyone feels Ben would have been a Cairoli, or a Villopoto, but due to injuries he didn't get there. He has the chance to come back and maybe kill some demons from his past. How do you see it panning out.

Coppins: I see it being tough. We all know Ben has the speed and the desire to do the job. It's 18 rounds a long series and I see Ben in a different place as he was before. He has a family and when you are the best you have to be really determined and very selfish, so that could be an issue. It doesn't matter if you are Ryan Villopoto or Ben Townley, you have to be in Europe, you have to ride in the cold and wet days, spend time with the team, develop the bike and do all the work. And I see those last few things as possible being an issue. Doing well in one race and doing well in 18 is very different.



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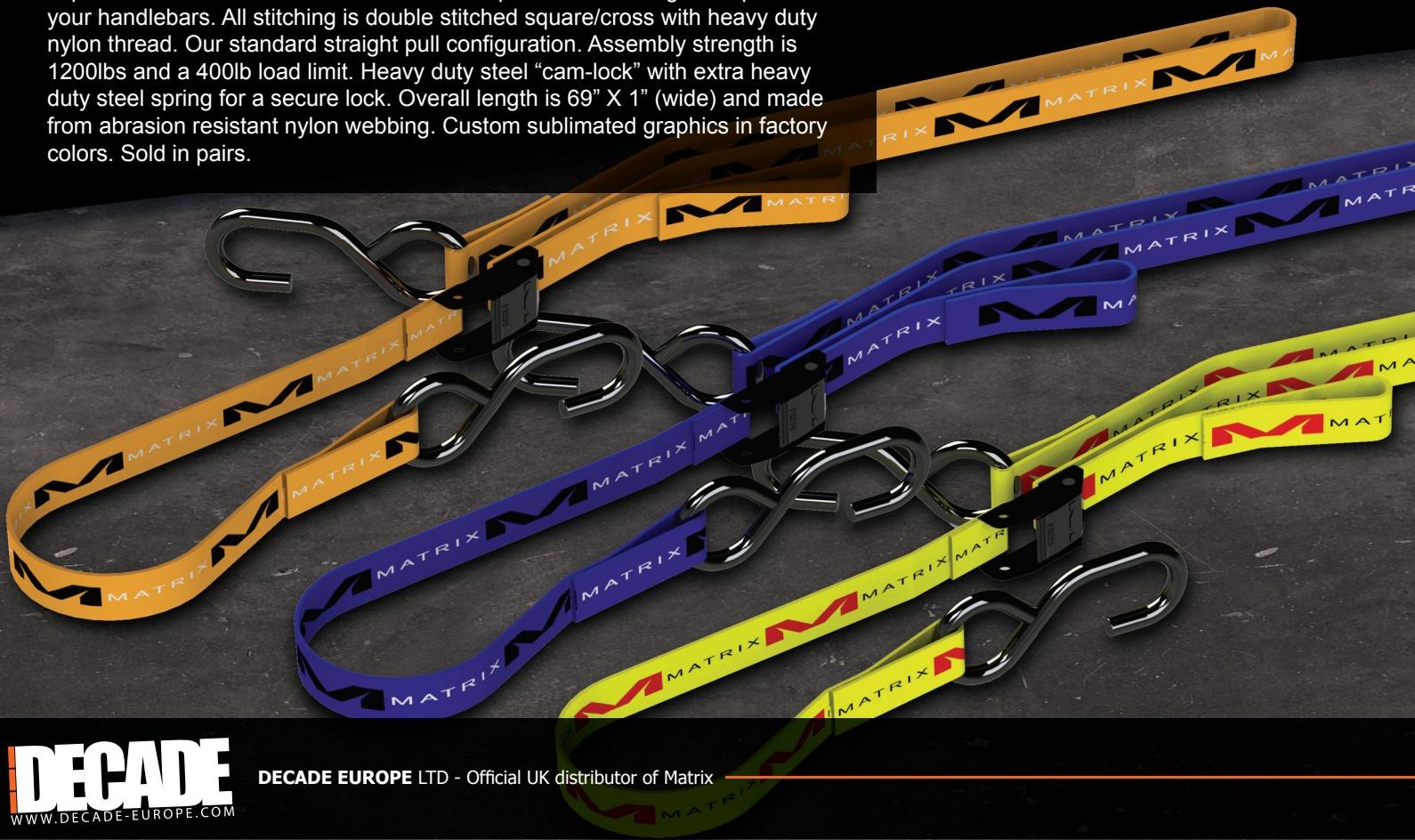
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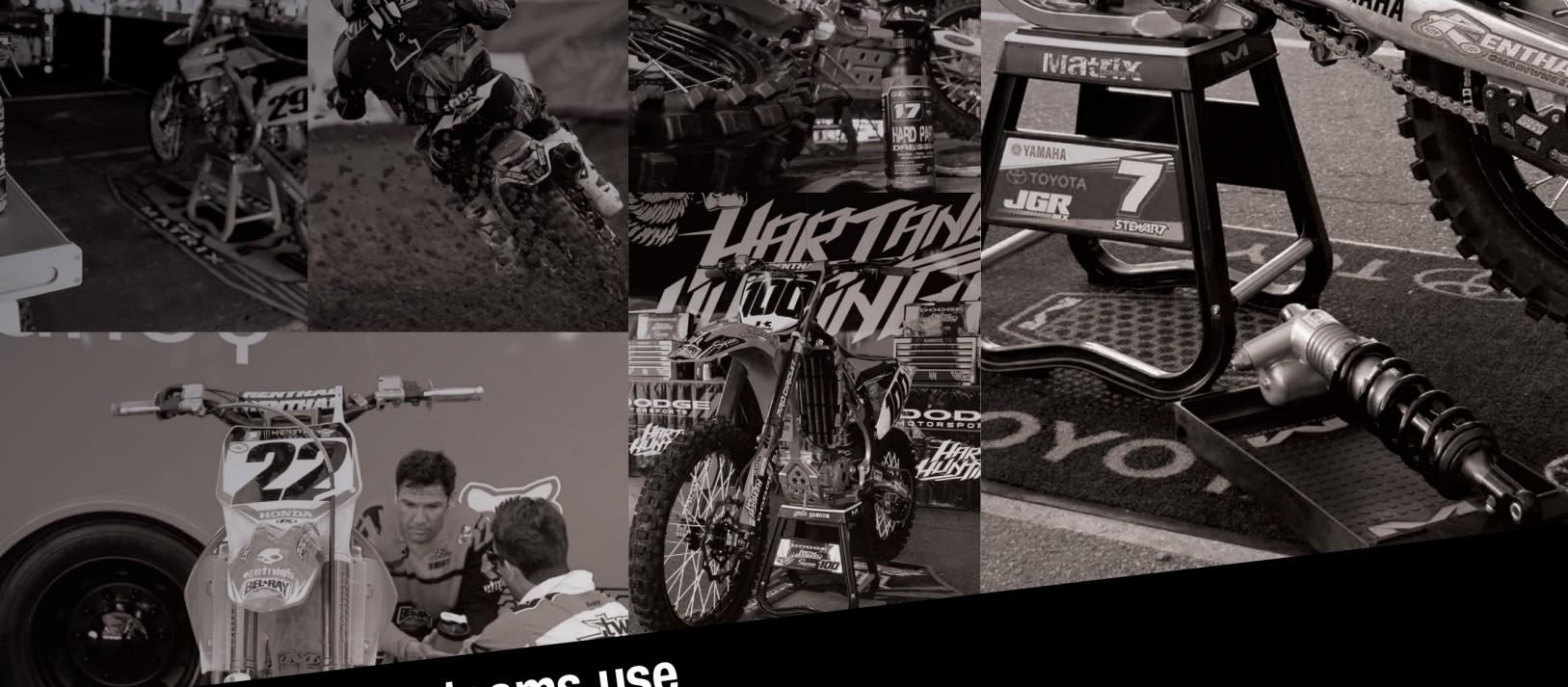


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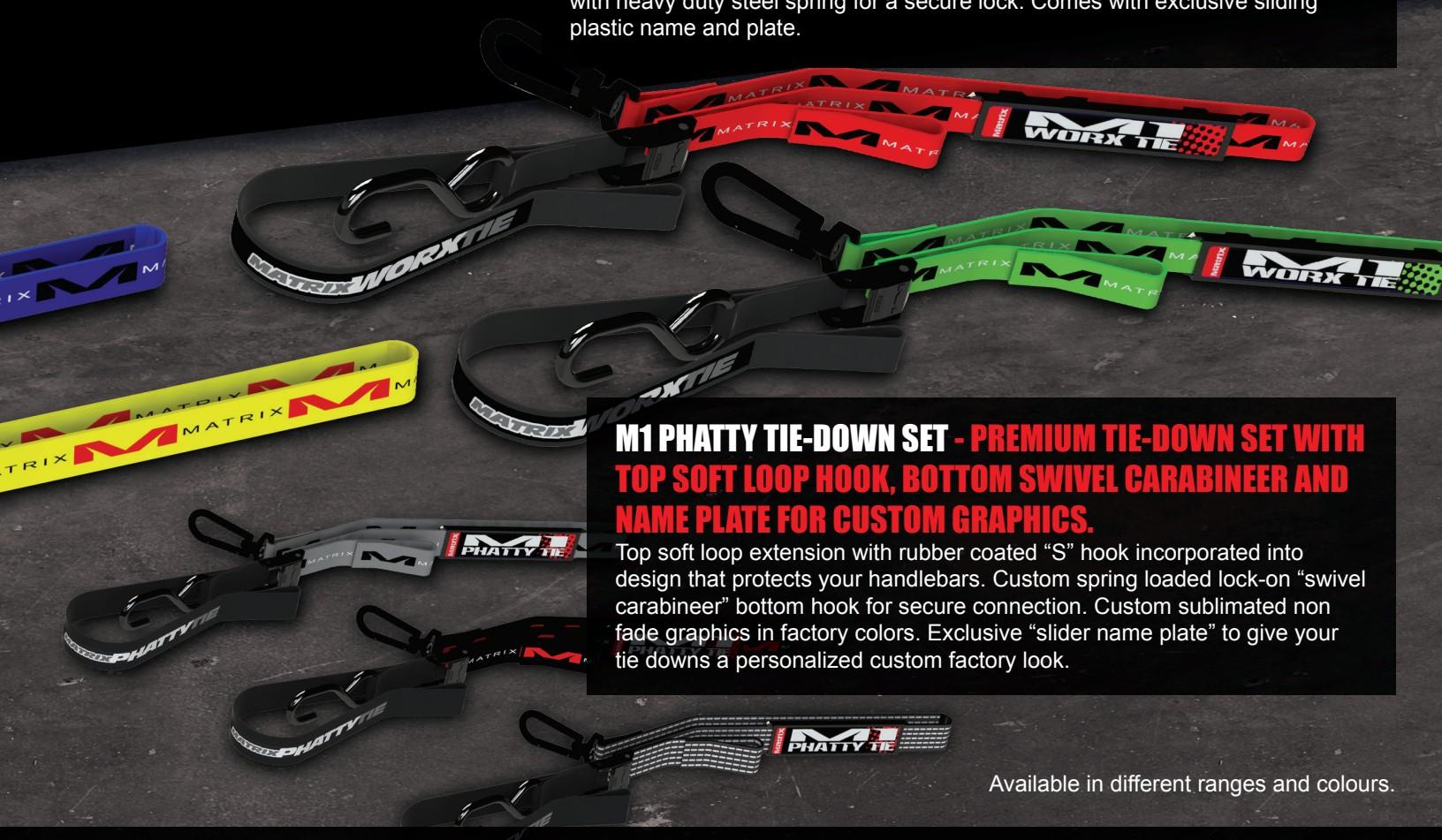




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